MASCOT MADNESS

Meet Ottawa's fuzziest representatives

metroNEWS

THE TRIP IS OFF

Inside the growing divide between the U.S. and Mexico

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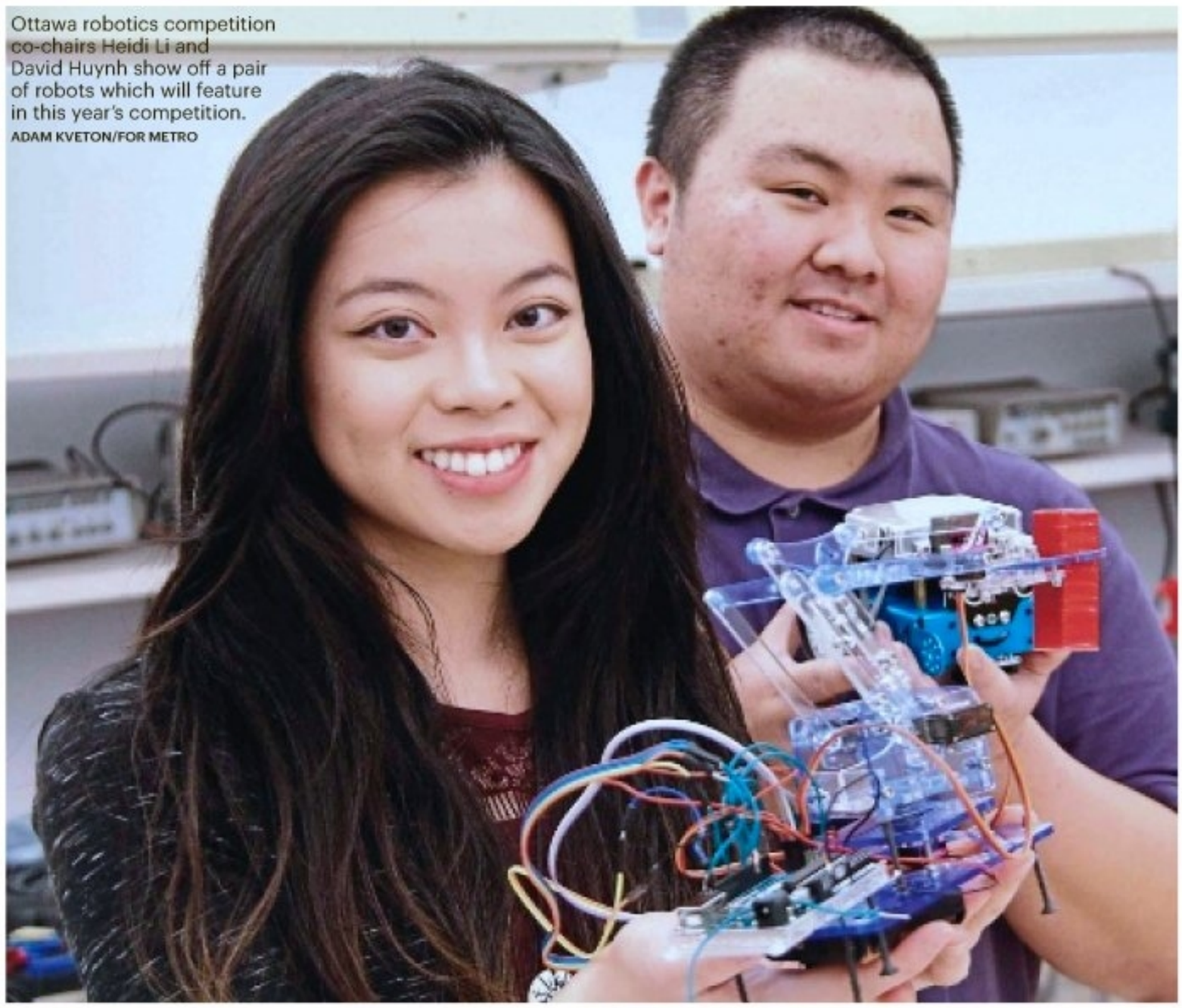
Ottawa metro

SUGAR SHOWDOWN

metroSCIENCE

Your essential daily news | WEEKEND, JANUARY 27-29, 2017 High -1°C/Low -7°C Snow showers



Ottawa robotics competition co-chairs Heidi Li and David Huynh show off a pair of robots which will feature in this year's competition.
ADAM KVETON/FOR METRO

POWER UP, GIRLS!

Ottawa students using robotics competition to shorten the tech gender gaps

metroNEWS

Delays mount for Gatineau commuters

LABOUR STRIFE

Union members refuse overtime in first step to strike mandate

Dylan C. Robertson
For Metro | Ottawa

Gatineau commuters face increasing delays on the Société de transport de l'Outaouais (STO), as the bus company's union enters a seventh day of work-to-rule measures.

Since last Friday, union members have refused overtime hours, in the first step toward declaring a strike.

On Monday, drivers started reporting buses for repairs, including minor issues like windshield wipers. With a backlog of repairs and mechanics refusing overtime, that's left the STO cutting scheduled buses.

"Despite all of that, we intend to maintain service as much as we can," STO spokeswoman Céline Gauthier said.

The agency cancels buses on its busiest routes, so commuters take packed buses instead of being abandoned on rural routes.

Because their contract is suspended, STO doesn't pay drivers sent home due to a lack of buses.

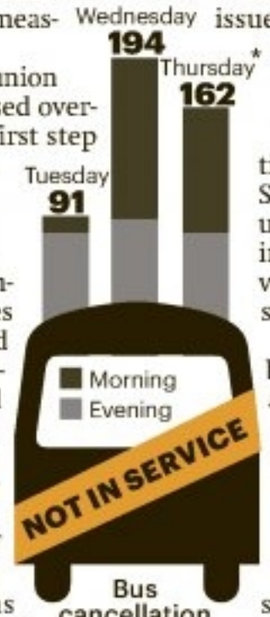
ATU local 591 head Félix Gendron said Monday commuters were frustrated by the delays, but improving weather and STO cancellation alerts helped passengers anticipate delays.

"The passengers have been a lot less upset as the week's gone by," he said. "We're supported by the public."

The union's main issues — sick leave and growing work hours — persisted prior to their contract's December 2014 expiration. Gendron claims STO has resisted union demands, leading to a 98 per cent vote in support of a strike mandate.

While union members have warned of a possible lock-out on social media, STO claims that's not on the table.

"For the moment, that isn't among the scenarios we're considering. We'd much prefer discussions through our planned meetings at the negotiation table," Gauthier said, with talks planned Monday and Tuesday.



Bus cancellation numbers
*As of press time

MERLO | DAVIDSON SETTLEMENT

NOTICE OF CERTIFICATION AND SETTLEMENT APPROVAL HEARING

RCMP GENDER HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION CLASS ACTION

If you are a female or identified as a female and were an RCMP Regular Member (for purposes of this Proposed Settlement includes Regular Members, Special Constables, Cadets, Auxiliary Constables, Special Constable Members, and Reserve Members), Civilian Member or Public Service Employee (for purposes of this Proposed Settlement includes Temporary Civilian Employees) working within the RCMP, this notice may affect your legal rights. Please read it carefully.

Class action lawsuits were initiated alleging gender based harassment and discrimination within the RCMP. The Defendants, while not admitting liability, have agreed to a settlement of these lawsuits. A federal court class action has been certified on consent, conditional on court approval of the settlement.

Who is Eligible for the Proposed Settlement?

To be eligible to participate in the settlement, you must be a member of the class. The class is defined as:

Primary Class Members: female current and former living Regular Members, Civilian Members and Public Service Employees (who are appointed by the Commissioner of the RCMP under the delegated authority of the Public Service Commission pursuant to the Public Service Employment Act, R.S.C., 1985, c. P-32; amended S.C. 2003, c. 22, ss.12, 13) who worked within the RCMP during the Class Period who experienced and/or continue to experience gender and sexual orientation based harassment and discrimination while working in the RCMP during the Class Period, and who have not opted out or are not deemed to have opted out of the Class Action on or before the expiry of the Opt Out Period.

For the purposes of this Agreement "**Regular Members**" includes Regular Members, Special Constables, Cadets, Auxiliary Constables, Special Constable Members, and Reserve Members

For the purposes of this Agreement "**Public Service Employees**" includes Temporary Civilian Employees who, prior to 2014 were appointed under the now-repealed subsection 10(2) of the RCMP Act, R.S.C., 1985, c. R-10;

Secondary Class Members: All persons who have a derivative claim in accordance with applicable family law legislation arising from a family relationship with a member of the Primary Class.

If you **do not** wish to participate in the class action, you must deliver a signed Opt-Out Form to Class Counsel received or postmarked no later than March 29, 2017. If you do not exclude yourself by that date, you will be included in this lawsuit and will be bound by the court's judgement on the settlement. The Opt-Out Form can be obtained from Class Counsel at the address below. It is also available on Class Counsel's websites.

If you have an ongoing lawsuit with respect to gender or sexual orientation based harassment or discrimination in the RCMP, and you wish to participate in the proposed class action settlement, you must discontinue your lawsuit before March 29, 2017. If you do not, you will be deemed by s. 334.21(2) of the Federal Court Rules, SOR/98-106 to have opted out of the class action. Please contact your lawyer to discuss your options.

The Terms of the Proposed Settlement

The settlement contains numerous change initiatives directed at eliminating workplace harassment and discrimination in the RCMP. The settlement also provides compensation for members of the Primary Class who experienced gender or sexual orientation based harassment or discrimination while working in the RCMP during the Class Period. Compensation is available for Secondary Class Members where the Primary Class Member's Claim is assessed at either of the two highest severity levels.

You can obtain a copy of the settlement agreement and the applicable schedules by contacting Class Counsel at the address below. These documents are also available on Class Counsel's websites.

The Approval Hearing and Your Right to Participate

A motion to approve the settlement is scheduled to be heard on May 24, 2017 at 9:30 am at the Federal Court of Canada, Trial Division, in Toronto. Class Counsel will also ask the court to approve an award of fees and disbursements for their work in achieving the settlement.

If you agree with the proposed settlement, you do not have to do anything at this time. If the court approves the settlement, a notice will be published setting out the procedures for submitting a Claim.

If you disagree with the proposed settlement, you have the right to object. You may do so by delivering a letter to Class Counsel in advance of the hearing, which Class Counsel will then provide to the court. In your letter, you should provide your name, contact information, and a brief statement of the nature and reasons for your objection.

What are the Financial Consequences?

If the settlement is approved by the court and you have not opted out of the class action prior to the opt-out deadline, you will be bound by the terms of the settlement.

The defendants have agreed to pay Class Counsel's disbursements and are making a contribution toward class counsel fees. Class Counsel will request a further class counsel fee of 15% plus applicable sales tax payable from the compensation awarded to class members under the settlement. The award of class counsel fees is subject to court approval.

For More Information

For more information about the settlement, contact Class Counsel at:

Klein Lawyers LLP
Attn: Angela Bespflug
Suite 400-1385 West 8th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V6H 3V9
Phone: (604) 874-7171 • Fax: (604) 874-7180

Kim Orr Barristers P.C.
Attn: Megan B. McPhee
19 Mercer Street, Suite 400
Toronto, ON M5V 1H2
Phone: (416) 596-1414 • Fax: (416) 598-0601

metro NEWS

Your essential daily news

We're all doomed. World

5 THINGS TO DO IN THE CITY THIS WEEKEND

Hot chocolate, Sexapalooza and kilts — everything you need to have a good time in advance of Winterlude.

HALEY RITCHIE METRO

1 Winter Celebration

The Governor General is hosting the winter celebration at Rideau Hall on Saturday from 12:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. There will be skating, showshoeing, cross-country skiing and special activities courtesy of winter-nation embassies. All activities are free of charge, but please bring donations for the Ottawa Food Bank or Snowsuit Fund.

2 Sexapalooza

The sex showcase returns to the Shaw Centre this weekend, from Friday to Sunday. There will be stage shows, seminars, the Alley of Fantasy, a Dungeon experience and a giant penis. Vendors will also be selling all things sexy. Tickets are $25 for a day pass or $15 for students with valid ID. Adults only.

3 Ottawa Health and Wellness Expo

On Saturday, a hundred health-and-wellness vendors will fill the Shenkman Arts Centre from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. There will be speakers, live demonstrations, fitness fashion shows and a movie screening. General admission is $8.

4 Sir John A's Great Canadian Kilt Skate

The Scottish Society of Ottawa is hosting the "Great Canadian Kilt Skate" on Saturday starting at noon at Lansdowne Park. Celebrate Scottish heritage and Sir John A. Macdonald's birthday in your tartan. There will be free hot chocolate and birthday cake. The event is free and goes until 2 p.m.

5 Snowshoeing under the stars

Staff at Pinhey's Point will be leading two snowshoeing trips this weekend: Friday from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Basics will be taught pre-excursion, and hot chocolate will be served by the open fire afterward. Registration is required. Call 613-247-4830 ext. 221. Cost is $10.45 for adults and $6.30 for children.

EVENTS

Organizers reinvent FUSE fest

Haley Ritchie
Metro | Ottawa

Organizers of Westboro Fuse say the community festival is getting a new format after the 2016 edition yielded poor financial results and negative feedback.

"Westboro FUSE is not being cancelled for 2017," said Dan Hwang, Westboro BIA chair, in an email.

Instead of one weekend party, the format of the event will change to smaller events over three to four weekends. The new festival will include themed weekends like fashion, food and fitness.

Hwang said the new format will mean the festival isn't limited by weather and will bring more people to the area.

"Our aim is that it will help promote Westboro Village throughout the seasons," he said.

FUSE was started in 2016 after Westfest — a similar block-party event with a 12-year legacy — moved to Laroche Park. The BIA, which had been funding Westfest, invested $100,000 in a new festival, Westboro FUSE.

Last year's ambitious program, whose theme was aboriginal culture, included a zipline, fire artists, craft beer and street yoga.

"After each festival, we would always survey our members to get a sense of their feelings towards the event," Hwang said. "The survey was always split with members who did benefit from the festival and those who did not. This year, we decided to try something a bit different."

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Ottawa DIGEST

BARRHAVEN

Boy charged after pointing crossbow at police car

A youth has been charged with assault and other offences after pointing a bow and arrow at a police cruiser while walking outside of an elementary school.

The 14-year-old boy was arrested at about 4 p.m. Wednesday in Barrhaven, just across the street from Mary Honeywell Elementary School. The school went into lockdown.

Police say one other school went into lockdown as well.

CTV Ottawa has posted video of the incident, which it says was taken by a passing driver.

In the video, the youth appears to aim the bow and arrow at a nearby police cruiser, which backs up behind a tree. The youth then puts the bow and arrow in the snow and takes what looks like a hatchet out of his backpack.

That first policeman on the scene was able to de-escalate what had become a "standoff," said a police news release.

ADAM KVETON / FOR METRO

GATINEAU

Probe launched after woman dies in custody

Quebec's independent police investigator is probing the death of a 34-year-old Gatineau women on Wednesday evening.

According to the Bureau des enquêtes indépendantes, Gatineau police were called at 6:14 p.m. to an apartment block and found an agitated women who seemed to have hit her head.

The woman was hospitalized and died while in police custody late Wednesday night.

The apartment block was in the Mont-Bleu neighbourhood, perched on the east side of Gatineau Park near the intersection of highways 5 and 105.

Eight investigators have been assigned to the case, BEI spokesman Martin Bonin-Charron said. Unlike Ontario's Special Investigations Unit, Quebec BEI officers send their reports to the Crown to decide whether police should be charged; in Ontario the SIU makes such a decision.

DYLAN C. ROBERTSON/FOR METRO

RIDEAU STREET

Police looking for armed robbery suspect

Police are asking for the public's help in investigating a robbery earlier this month at a Rideau St. convenience store.

Police believe a young man used a knife to rob cash from a shopkeeper in the 100 block of Rideau St., which spans the McDonald's east to the Beer Store. The incident occurred January 9, a Monday night around 11:15 p.m. No one was injured.

The suspect
CONTRIBUTED

Officers have released a photo, seeking a white man 25-30 years old with brown stubble. He wore a grey winter jacket and hoodie, with a red T-shirt.

The robbery unit wants anyone with information to phone them at 613-236-1222, ext. 5116, or to anonymously call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477.

DYLAN C. ROBERTSON/FOR METRO

OC Owl most recently made a daylight appearance at the opening of the Innovation park and ride.
METROLAND MEDIA

Mascots on call to promote events

CAMPAIGNS

They are furry faces of health, recreation, fire safety, transit

Just who is the large dog at your community association's fun day? Was that a beaver at my child's school? There are a number of city mascots available to promote various city departments.

PHIZ

According to Ottawa Public Health, Phiz, the physical activity beaver mascot, was originally meant to promote the city's active living campaign. Now he continues to promote healthy living.

DEXTER

Dexter the Parkosaurus is part of the city's recreation, cultural and facility services.

Dexter goes to wading pools and outdoor rinks. He can also be called into duty for corporate events like the United Way campaign.

OC OWL

OC OWL has a longer life story. Designed in the 1980s as part of the OC Transpo Transecure program, the owl was designed by a firm called Quorum Graphics, according to a former employee.

The Glebe-based firm closed its doors in 1988.

According to Pat Scrimgeour, OC Transpo's director of transit customer systems and planning, the owl was originally an ambassador for transit education and safety awareness campaigns.

OC Owl is still an ambassador for the Transecure program, which includes the night stop, the safe stop and the "Let OC Transpo Know" programs.

WALLY

Wally, the mascot for public works and environment services, has two purposes.

Wally the Water Dog is used to promote the city's drinking water. Wally the Recycling Dog is responsible for promoting the city's recycling and green bin programs. Wally's role prior to 2015 was Wally the Poop and Scoop dog.

SPARKY

Sparky, a large Dalmatian that shares its name with the mascot for the Ottawa Fury, represents Ottawa Fire Services.

By far the oldest mascot, Sparky was created in 1951 by the National Fire Protection Association to be the symbol for the national fire prevention campaign. Fire chief Gerry Pingitore wrote in an email that Sparky was inspired by the success of Smokey the Bear.

JENNIFER MCINTOSH
METROLAND MEDIA

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Teams from ByWard Market restaurants, bars, and cafés compete for the title of server champions!
Shake off the Cold
From Friday, Feb 3rd right through to Monday, Feb 20th
Various establishments
Dance away the cold to hot beats in the ByWard Market!
ByWard Beats
ByWard Garage, 70 Clarence Street loading bays
Fridays and Saturdays during Winterlude, 7:30 pm - 10:30 pm
Shake off the cold and get into the groove with local DJs in this urban space!
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Snow Sculptures in the ByWard Market
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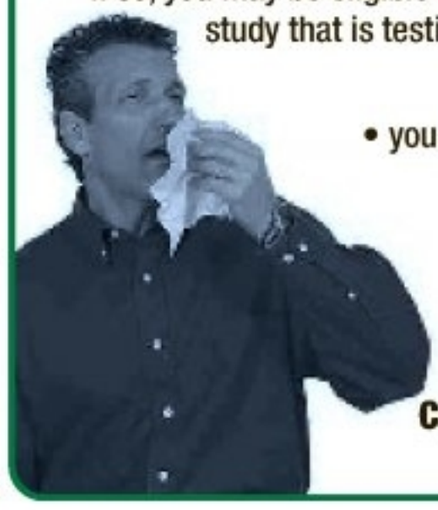
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Robots built by teams of Grades 5-12 students will compete in **IEEE Ottawa Robotics Competition**. These are robots from the 2016 event. COURTESY IEEE OTTAWA ROBOTICS COMPETITION

Powering up learning

SCIENCE

Robotics Competition works to crush gender gap

Adam Kveton
For Metro | Ottawa

A competition that has kids from Grades 5 -12 build, program and drive their own robots hopes to crush a growing gender gap this year.

The IEEE Ottawa Robotics Competition has been introducing kids to STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) for 15 years now via the robots programs. While it's inspired many students like current co-chairs Heidi Li and David Huynh to pursue degrees in science, its participants have remained mostly male.

This year, Li, Huynh and sponsor IBM are trying to change that with a new fund. In addition to subsidizing 25 per cent of registration fees for all participants, all girl teams will be able to access a fund of up to $1,000 to participate.

The new fund came about after IBM partners saw a lack of girl participants at last year's competition, said Krista Shibata, IBM Canada's women in technology lead.

"It was not even close to 50/50 from a participation rate, and that very much reflects what's going on in the real world with girls in STEM and girls in coding and engineering," she said.

While the gender gap in life sciences has shrunk, there have been fewer and fewer women in computer and math occupations and post-secondary schooling since 1990, said Shibata.

With a huge growth in computer technology jobs forecast, IBM is hoping women can be a large part of that.

The Ottawa robotics competition is certainly one way to start, said Li and Huynh.

POLICE

Elevating fight against distracted driving

Haley Ritchie
Metro | Ottawa

Checking your rearview mirror for police lights? Don't forget to look up.

Ottawa police traffic officers have started using a high-set vehicle for busting people who are texting while driving.

"It's opened up a whole new avenue of how we can do enforcement for people that think they can hide their texting in their lap," said Sgt. Mark Gatien.

"When we're in our (Ford) Tauruses we're equal to everybody. Even though you see their head down the rules of evidence won't just allow us to use heads down. I'm sure they're texting but we have to prove it."

The new vehicle, a GMC Savana, is a windowless cargo van in which the driver sits at a height similar to that of a bus driver. From the outside it looks ordinary, but like a normal cruiser it's equipped with lights, a siren and a computer.

The Savana's original purpose was prisoner transportation, but traffic services has received permission to hold on to it for the time being.

The idea came from Const. Michel Vandal, a traffic officer in the force's central division.

"He's getting tickets continuously from it," Gatien said. "It's just another tool for us because texting has become the highest fatality over impaired driving in the past year."

Gatien recently tweeted that 15 charges had been laid in a single shift, adding up to $7,350 in fines.

"People are saying, 'Why aren't we doing anything?'" Gatien said. "But we are doing something. There's just only so many of us, and so many people that are texting."

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Tax havens: Lessons from Britain

PANAMA PAPERS

In 2016, it became leader in exposing tax cheats

A Union flag flies near Big Ben in London. Britain requires corporate registrations to include the names of the real company owners and list them in an online database. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

The glittering towers and spartan offices of this international financial capital hold billions of illicit offshore dollars, money belonging to countless anonymous company owners who came here to evade taxes and finance fraud, money laundering and terrorism.

That established model of corporate concealment, adopted by Canada, has met its end in Britain.

Last June, Britain became the world leader in exposing tax cheats by requiring corporate registrations to include the names of the real company owners — or "persons with significant control" — and listing the records in a database that anyone can view free online.

The British model, although still new, has been hailed as groundbreaking for disarming the most essential weapon for tax evaders: secrecy. Britaln's top financial crime cop considers corporate ownership secrecy "a threat to the economic security of the U.K."

The Canadian government has displayed no such sense of urgency. In Canada's federal and provincial corporate registries, it is difficult — often impossible — to identify the real owners of companies if they choose to hide behind lawyers, accountants or paper-only directors.

It's the same kind of corporate secrecy that lures money launderers, tax evaders, drug traffickers and embezzlers to offshore tax havens such as Panama, the Seychelles and British Virgin Islands.

Canada's growing reputation as a tax haven has consequences, say experts, including attracting money from criminals and injecting unrestrained foreign investment into real-estate markets that drives up housing costs beyond the reach of many Canadians.

Here's how it works: Let's say you're a foreign business person looking to evade taxes and hide any connection to money flowing into your company.

You may well want to run that cash through an anonymous shell company registered in a place that doesn't require you to list your name on any public document, file taxes or keep any financial records.

Ontario is perfect.

Ontario limited partnerships have become a go-to corporate structure for hiding international wealth legally thanks to secretive business registration and regulations that are being used in ways the province never intended.

Countries around the world are wrestling to close the regulatory black holes that facilitate tax evasion in the aftermath of the Panama Papers revelations, based on the leak of 11.5 million documents obtained by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists and shared in Canada with the Star and the CBC.

Britain, once heavily criticized for failing to control its overseas territories such as the British Virgin Islands, chose the right target for rooting out tax cheats, says Robert Palmer, who runs the anti-money laundering arm of the U.K. research group Global Witness.

Former British business secretary Vince Cable, an architect of the British public registry, said his government acted because the country was "in danger of attracting bad people with bad money."

"Russian oligarchs for an example, they did acquire quite substantial companies here," said Cable, who took on powerful corporate interests in the City of London to create the registry.

"Britain has taken the lead and now it is reasonable to expect for other countries like Canada to look at the experience and see if it has improved things."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

What does your Canada look like?

What is your favourite place in Canada? Is it the street you grew up on, the place where you shared your first kiss, or that secret spot you visit to get away from the hustle and bustle of life? We want to know.

To mark the country's 150th birthday, Metro is launching 150 Postcards, where you get to share your favourite piece of Canada with your friends, neighbours and fellow Canadians. Starting Feb. 1, we will feature one reader's submission each day in Metro editions across the county, on Metronews.ca and our 150postcards Instagram page. On the Friday before the Canada Day long weekend, the most popular postcards we receive will be printed in Metro. METRO

GET INVOLVED

Send us a photo of your favourite place in Canada along with 25 to 50 words about why that place is special to you. You can email us at **scene@metronews.ca** or post to Instagram or Twitter with the hashtag **#150canada**.

OIFSC

Are you looking for an exciting, long-term and profitable career in a skilled trade!

The OIFSC is seeking interested participants in the Ottawa area to enter a 33-week Architectural Glass & Metal Technician Pre-Apprenticeship training program. The program includes complete Health & Safety training, Basic Level Apprenticeship training and a paid 8-week work placement. In our most recent program all participants who entered the work placement gained full-time employment. There is no cost to participate in this program.

What you will need to enter the Program:

- ✓ Be a resident of Ontario; 18 years of age or older.
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- ✓ Able to provide educational documentation/transcript.
- ✓ Good health and physically fit – able to lift 50 lbs. unassisted repetitively.
- ✓ Enjoy working with your hands and outside at varying temperatures.
- ✓ Able to work at heights above 30 ft.
- ✓ Sincere interest in working in a skilled trade in the construction industry.
- ✓ A clear criminal reference check is preferred.

Training Start Date: February 6, 2017

EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO

This program is funded by Employment Ontario

If you are interested in applying for the program or would like more information, please phone the Skills Centre and speak to **Trainer-George** at **613-228-5222** to register for an information sessions, which will be held at 199 Colonnade Road South, Unit 4. **www.oifsc.com/site**

When you're photobombed by a shark

WILDLIFE

10-year-old's unusual experience in Australia

A 10-year-old surfer has had a close encounter with a photobombing shark that shared a wave with him off an Australian beach.

Chris Hasson said Thursday that he was taking photos of his son Eden riding a wave off Samurai Beach at Port Stephens, 180 kilometres north of Sydney, on Tuesday when something unexpected and indistinct caught his eye.

He discovered he had photographed the face of a twisting shark just below the surface with his son on an apparent collision course. "I saw the second photo and (thought) — no way," Hasson said. "I quickly called him in and whistled."

"He (Eden) saw a shape in the wave and thought it was seaweed and felt something as he went over the top — he got his leg rope caught on something — but he thought nothing of it until he saw the photo," Hasson said.

James Cook University shark researcher Andrew Chin said the photographed shark was possibly a small great white.

"From the angle, it looks like the shark was spooked and is rolling away from the board to escape it," Chin said. "There is no way that this is a hunting approach."

Port Stephens is on the northern coast of New South Wales state which has experienced an extraordinary increase in shark attacks since a Japanese tourist was killed by a great white in early 2015.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Chris Hasson's son, Eden, surfs near what is believed to be a great white shark at Samurai Beach in Port Stephens, Australia.
COURTESY CHRIS HASSON VIA THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

GAMBIA

Throngs cheer new president's return

President Adama Barrow returned triumphantly to Gambia on Thursday, nearly two months after winning an election disputed by the country's longtime dictator, to the cheers of hundreds of thousands who jammed the roads in welcome.

"That's my president!" the crowds cried, eager to see Barrow fulfil the promise of democratic reforms and newfound freedoms in this tiny West African nation.

The impasse after the Dec. 1 balloting had brought Gambia to the brink of military intervention, as regional leaders vowed to install the democratically elected Barrow despite legal efforts by longtime ruler Yahya Jammeh to overturn the result of the vote. Barrow had flown to Banjul from Senegal, where he had waited for Jammeh to leave Gambia.

Barrow stood out of the roof of his vehicle and waved as he slowly made his way on a tour of the city and back to his home.

Gambians had eagerly awaited Barrow, who has promised to reverse many of the authoritarian policies of Jammeh. The former leader oversaw a government accused of imprisoning, torturing and killing his political opponents.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DOOMSDAY CLOCK

Trump moves world closer to existential catastrophe

The Doomsday Clock has moved 30 seconds closer to midnight, meaning the world is just two and a half minutes from the point of existential catastrophe.

In a statement released Thursday, The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists said although the decision to adjust the symbolic clock is often based on examining long-term threats to humanity, this year, the actions and statements of one person — Donald Trump — and the rise in 'strident nationalism' became a major driving factor in the board's decisions.

IRENE KUAN/METRO

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President Trump: The words still shock

Even now, the words retain a dystopian tinge.

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD
From the U.S.

Each day, now, waking up and turning on the radio, two words float out: "President Trump." They're tossed in among the weather by a voice that sounds not at all surprised to utter the phrase.

But I remain shocked. Not electric shocked: I've been awake these past months, after all. Normalization — the fear of the left — and the human urge to accept what you see has downgraded the feeling to a static jolt. A mere flick to the brain.

"Oh, right," I think. "President Trump." Then the newscast goes on, and a smorgasbord of campaign promises and knee-jerk presidential directives come tumbling out of the presenters' measured voices.

One day, Trump is picking a fight with the media over his lies about crowd sizes at his inauguration while simultaneously disrespecting murdered CIA agents, the next he's cutting international and national funding for women's health in a nod to anti-abortion extremists. Quietly, his administration has wiped climate change from the White House website and muzzled Environmental Protection Agency and National Parks staff. He's ordered the wall to be built, and a ban on Syrian refugees, among others, is in the works. He's considering withholding funding from "sanctuary cities" which help illegal immigrants; he's launching an investigation to baseless and disproven claims of massive voter fraud. He might even send federal law enforcement into Chicago to deal with gun crime. Meanwhile, GOP leadership is putting up a mostly unified front. Business leaders are getting in line, meeting with the new president to secure their spot on his good list, lest he sic his Twitter account on them.

Reporters are rushing to keep up on all fronts, with Trump's pronouncement that torture is effective and his family's new $200,000 Mar-a-Lago membership fee, which doubled this month.

"It's chaos," one reporter tweeted.

Or it's the trenches. It turns out Trump was both serious and literal in his campaign. His whims will be orders. His grievances wielded with the weight of the presidency. He was not playing the bombastic, feuding egomaniac for votes. The reality show is the morning news.

When I hear "President Trump," as I'm pouring my coffee, it retains its dystopian tinge. I wonder if this is how people felt in other times of upheaval, going about their morning routines, for example, while the world teetered on nuclear war. There is a dissonance between the normality of the life you've been living, and the political reality into which you've been plunged.

The steady voice of news anchors you know, the work of writers you've come to rely on offer some solace. People you trust are keeping track, countering lies, investigating, analysing. Even the civil service, unused to being exploited for such deeply personal and ideological ends, is acting out, leaking memos to the press and launching rogue Twitter accounts.

It is a luxury, and a great one, that up until this week my mornings have been largely peaceful. I am a novice in fear, waking up to Trump.

Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto cancelled his visit to the U.S. over a debate with Donald Trump on who will pay for the border wall. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS & AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Trump, Pena Nieto spar

President Donald Trump called on fellow Republicans to help him enact "great and lasting change" at a party retreat Thursday but offered few details. Later his spokesman said the president will seek a 20 per cent tax on Mexican imports to pay for a proposed border wall.

The president was greeted by cheers as he took the stage in a hotel ballroom, telling senators and House members, "This Congress is going to be the busiest Congress in decades - maybe ever."

He addressed lawmakers shortly after Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto cancelled a trip to Washington next week for his first meeting with the new president due to their disagreement over which of their countries would pay to build Trump's promised wall on the border between them.

The wall is part of Trump's plan to halt illegal immigration to the U.S., and he has long said that Mexico will pay. Pena Nieto insists his country will not.

On the flight back to Washington, White House spokesman Sean Spicer told reporters travelling with the president that Trump will seek to impose a 20 per cent tax on Mexican imports to pay for the wall. Congressional approval would be needed for such a step.

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NETHERLANDS

Dutch show skewers Trump in comedy video

Andrew Fifield
Metro | Toronto

Satirical news shows like Last Week Tonight and The Daily Show have spread across the world, and a lot of them are licking their chops about the Trump Administration.

So congratulations to the Dutch weekly Zondag met Lubach (Sunday with Lubach) for scoring the first global hit with their shot at the White House in the form of a fake tourism video.

After poking fun at the president's proclivities and rather distinct speech, the bit takes a sharp inward turn to comment on the issues the Netherlands faces at home, such as the "scandalous tradition of Black Pete"

However, it's not all teasing and jabs and the video takes us to a much more conciliatory conclusion.

"We've got a great, great, great dependency on the United States. It's huge," the faux Trump narrator says. "If you screw NATO, you're going to make our problems great again. They're going to be huge, they're going to be enormous. It's true. Please don't."

VIDEO ON THE METRO APP

about wall

But then later, at the White House, Spicer tried to take back his earlier comments by saying the 20 per cent tax is one of several options under consideration and Trump hasn't settled on it.

In Trump's remarks to lawmakers, he cast the cancellation of his engagement with Pena Nieto as a mutual decision, saying they had "agreed to cancel our planned meeting." Trump had tweeted early Thursday that "it would be better to cancel the upcoming meeting" given Pena Nieto's unwillingness to pay for the border wall.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Zondag met Lubach (Sunday with Lubach) scored the first global hit with their shot at the White House in the form of a fake tourism video.

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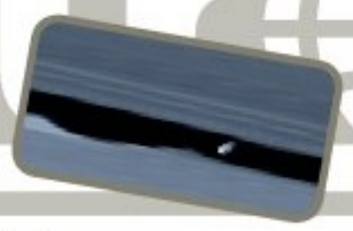
Your essential daily news



NASA's Cassini spacecraft has captured an eerie image of Saturn's moon Daphnis, shot through the rippling rings

DECODED by Genna Buck and Andrés Plana

WHO'S RIGHT? INSIDE THE SUGAR WARS

What is making us fat? The reasons for the obesity epidemic are still a matter of debate, even among experts. It's really hard to study the long-term effects of a given diet. Fat was once nutrition enemy number one, but now some critics are taking aim at sugar. Here are three different views.

What's insulin resistance?
You can think of the hormone insulin as a key that unlocks fat and muscle cells. Your body converts food into simple sugars. When you eat, your blood sugar spikes, and your pancreas releases insulin. Insulin brings your blood sugar down by encouraging muscle cells to absorb sugar and use it for energy, and fat cells to absorb sugar and store it as fat. If you have insulin resistance, you've built up a bit of a tolerance to insulin. You need to secrete more of it in order to have the same effect of your cells, making it harder to keep your blood sugar under control. Some experts, not all, believe insulin resistance is a major factor driving many chronic diseases, including obesity.

The skeptical scientist

Dr. David C.W. Lau, professor, University of Calgary

Gary Taubes's ideas are oversimplified. I've been doing research on obesity for a long time, so I'm very familiar with the arguments about sugar and insulin resistance. We develop insulin resistance as we gain more body fat. That is the body's natural defence mechanism to stop you from gaining more fat. It's one reason we tend to stay at a constant weight. But you usually won't become insulin resistant to the point that insulin doesn't work, unless you are prone to developing Type 2 diabetes. **Bottom line:** The amounts of carbs, fat, or other major nutrients in your diet don't matter as much as excess calories do. That's what causes weight gain.

The sugar-wary doctor

Dr. Khosrow Adeli, head of clinical biochemistry, SickKids

A little bit of sugar is important. It makes food taste good. But there is no question, from dozens of studies in humans and animals, that sugar, and particularly fructose, causes insulin resistance. When you develop insulin resistance, it can turn into a number of chronic conditions, including obesity and Type II diabetes. Too much fructose also causes high blood pressure and fatty liver disease. And the effects tend to be worse if you're also eating a lot of fat and other carbohydrates. Fructose and sugar are a problem not just because of all the calories they contain. If you compare them to calories from, say, fat, the fructose calories are much more harmful. B**ottom Line:** Along with lack of exercise and overeating, sugar, and especially fructose, is one of the main reasons for our obesity epidemic. Adults should cap fructose intake at 50 g per day.

The crusading journalist

Gary Taubes, author, The Case Against Sugar

For the past century or so, the worst we've said about sugar is that it's empty calories. The idea was that you could exercise it away and balance it by eating less of other things. That is naïve. There's a significant amount of evidence that sugar is a fundamental cause of the obesity and diabetes epidemics worldwide. Something in our diet and lifestyle is causing it, and sugar should be the prime suspect. We don't say **too much** smoking causes lung cancer. We say smoking causes lung cancer. If I'm right, and I clearly think and hope I am, doctors are going to be telling you sugar is killing you, don't eat it. **Bottom line:** Sugar kills; minimize your intake.

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Your week in science

MAY WARREN/METRO

SCIENTISTS MARCH
As a U.S. administration steeped in climate-change denial and other anti-science views takes power, scientists are planning to storm Washington, D.C. and demand evidence-based policy — after peer review of course.

SOUND SMART

DEFINITION
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metro WEEKEND
Your essential daily news
MOVIES MUSIC TELEVISION DIGITAL

Milla Jovovich returns to the big screen for the seventh, and possibly last, chapter of the Resident Evil film franchise. CONTRIBUTED

Resident Evil's teaching moment

ACTION HORROR

The franchise is a big money maker despite harsh ratings

Richard Crouse
For Metro Canada

Since 2002 Milla Jovovich has played a genetically altered zombie fighter with telekinetic powers in six Resident Evil films.

Like the undead fleshbags who populate these based-on-a-videogame movies, you can't seem to kill this franchise, although the title of this weekend's Resident Evil: The Final Chapter seems to indicate the end is near.

But just because the Resident Evil movies aren't Shakespeare doesn't mean we can't learn something from them. Here's what I took away from Jovovich and Company in the last thirteen years:

1. The undead have really, really bad aim.

2. No matter what stunt she has just performed, whether it's plummeting nineteen stories down an abandoned mine shaft, or battling legions of bad guys, Mila's hair will, at most, only look slightly tousled, as if Vidal Sassoon had just finished running his magic fingers through her locks.

3. The amount of rainfall in the future makes Vancouver look arid.

4. To act in one of these movies you must perfect one of two facial expressions: a. steely determination, or b. uncontrolled rage (which can be alternated with a sadistic smile if necessary).

5. Characters will say, "What the hell is going on here?" when it is quite clear what the heck is going on.

6. Most of the people to survive the deadly plague that destroyed most of humanity look like Abercrombie & Fitch pinups.

7. Why take the stairs when you can drive a Rolls Royce down an escalator?

So there you have it — lessons learned.

Despite legendary director Jean-Luc Godard's claim that, "All you need for a movie is a gun and a girl," both of which are amply on display in the Resident Evil movies, they still feel more like a videogame projected on a big screen than a movie.

But who cares what I or other film critics think? These movies have been phenomenally successful and for over a decade have proven to be critic-proof. Roger Ebert placed Resident Evil on his most hated films list in 2005 and called its sequel, "an utterly meaningless waste of time," adding, "Parents: If you encounter teenagers who say they liked this movie, do not let them date your children."

Leonard Maltin added to the pile on calling Resident Evil: Apocalypse "tiresome" while Dark Horizons said the third movie, Afterlife was, "perhaps the first 3D motion picture to simulate the experience of watching paint dry," and yet the splatter flick went on to gross $300 million dollars worldwide.

Critics aside, others in the film biz love the movies. Avatar director James Cameron called Resident Evil his biggest guilty pleasure and the Ontario Media Development Corporation acknowledged the Toronto-shot Afterlife as the most successful production in Canadian feature film history.

Bottom line is that in total, the series has grossed almost $1 billion — a feat recognized by the Guinness World Records Gamer's Edition who called the Resident Evil films "the most successful movie series to be based on a video game," awarding them with the record for Most Live-Action Film Adaptations of a Video Game.

MOVIE RATINGS by Richard Crouse

Gold	★★
Trespass Against Us	★★
The Red Turtle	★★★★
Toni Erdmann	★★★★

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★★	UP TO YOU
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A flashy blond in Bre-X gold scandal

INTERVIEW

Even a gaudy hairdo was fine for Bryce Dallas Howard

Steve Gow
For Metro Canada

It wasn't until Bryce Dallas Howard saw herself in a crazy permed wig that she truly found her character for the new movie Gold.

"You have to kind of see it to understand who that person is," admitted the 35-year-old star about trying on gaudy hairdos to unearth her character.

"It's a little punny, but that's when I got to try on different versions of her. Eventually we landed on curly-haired, big-boobed and clothes that were a size too tight for her."

Loosely paralleling the Canadian-based Bre-X scandal of the '90s, Gold excavates the account of a flighty prospector (played by a balding, chubby Matthew McConaughey) whose incredible Indonesian gold strike dupes thousands of investors out of millions of dollars — until the fortune isn't what it appears to be.

Playing the obsessed tycoon's whip-smart girlfriend, Howard was shocked to learn the incredible twists of the real swindle.

"My character was invented so it wasn't really something that was a big part of my preparation. Even now I'm learning more details," laughed Howard, of the adaptation that relocates the action from Alberta to Reno, Nev. "It's so bizarre to me that the story that it's based on took place in Canada; it feels like such a specifically American story because this story represents the potentials and evils of capitalism."

Howard's own tale is certainly one that has been nothing but blessed by potential.

Having set out in Hollywood in 2004, the daughter of legendary filmmaker Ron Howard may have hit early pay dirt with hits like The Village and Spider-Man 3, but the real treasure has only now arrived by balancing big-budget blockbusters like Jurassic World and quiet personal downtime.

"I'm more excited about stuff I'm getting to do than I've ever been," said Howard, currently preparing for the forthcoming Jurassic World sequel.

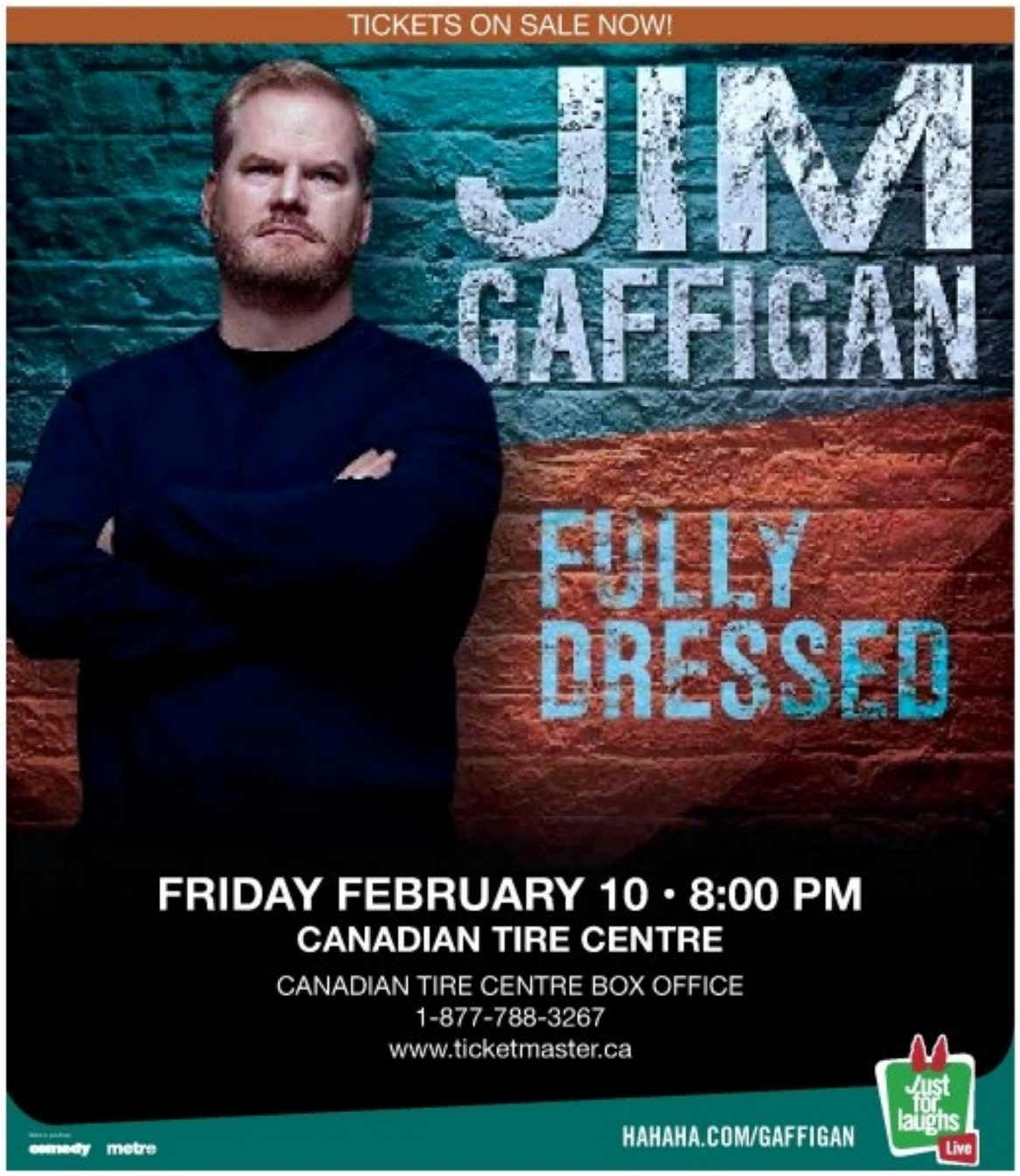
"But I've never lost my privacy, never had a massive change in lifestyle. I've been able to be home for long stretches of time with having kids (and) the fact that I've gotten to go back to working again is not something I take for granted."

MOVIES

Netflix changing the game for entertainers

"When I was younger, the gravy train of the movie business drove me bananas," Bryce Dallas Howard said of the changing film scene. "There's like a democratization of entertainment happening with Netflix and the cream rising to the top – it's a great time to be a storyteller."

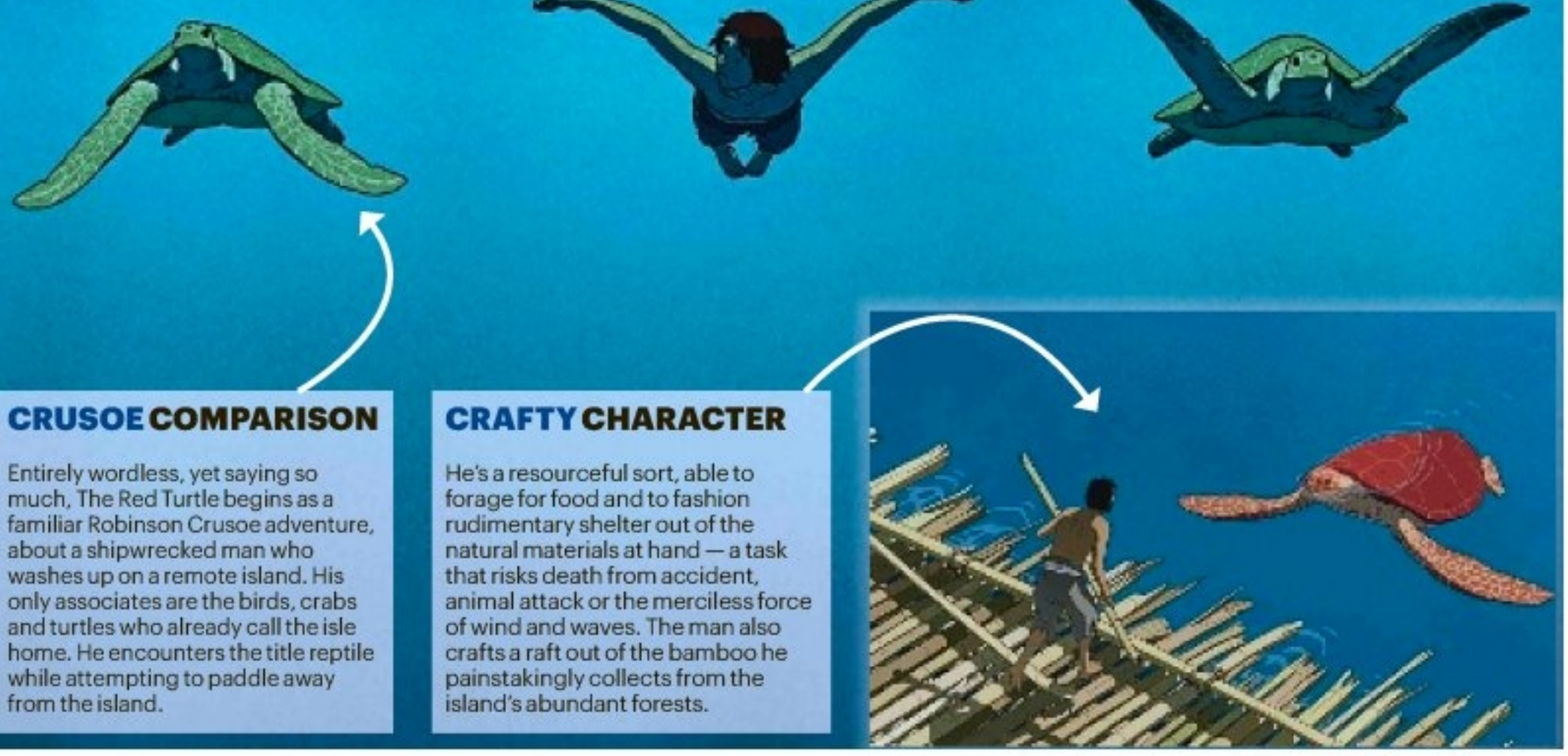
Bryce Dallas Howard and Matthew McConaughey in a scene from Gold. SUBMITTED



Castaway on a dream

The Red Turtle combines Japanese ghost stories and European narrative

Peter Howell/Torstar News Service



AWESOME AWARDS

This symbol-laden fable by Dutch-British writer/director Michael Dudok de Wit is nominated for an Oscar for best animated feature. He previously won an Academy Award in 2001 for the animated short, Father and Daughter. The stunning, pastel-shaded film is co-produced by Tokyo-based anime giant, Studio Ghibli.

CRUSOE COMPARISON

Entirely wordless, yet saying so much, The Red Turtle begins as a familiar Robinson Crusoe adventure, about a shipwrecked man who washes up on a remote island. His only associates are the birds, crabs and turtles who already call the isle home. He encounters the title reptile while attempting to paddle away from the island.

CRAFTY CHARACTER

He's a resourceful sort, able to forage for food and to fashion rudimentary shelter out of the natural materials at hand — a task that risks death from accident, animal attack or the merciless force of wind and waves. The man also crafts a raft out of the bamboo he painstakingly collects from the island's abundant forests.

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Chinese New Year, a union of traditions

CHINESE NEW YEAR

Multicultural families put a unique spin on festivities

Tina Anson Mine

More than one million Canadian residents identify themselves as being of Chinese heritage, according to Statistics Canada.

Of the more than 350,000 couples in that group, nearly 20 per cent report being in cross-cultural unions, in which both partners are from different cultural or ethnic backgrounds. This means more and more multicultural families are celebrating Chinese New Year and putting their unique spin on the festivities.

For Yaz Maziar and his wife, Heslie Chua, the holiday is all about gathering together with their family over a good meal.

Chua was born in Fujian (Fukien) province in China but grew up in Vancouver, and Chinese New Year has always been an important annual ritual. The couple sticks with traditional Chinese New Year foods but mixes up where they celebrate. Some years, they enjoy a Chinese buffet at a restaurant. This offers something delicious for everyone, including Maziar's parents, who hail from Iran, and the couple's 4-year-old son, Cameron. "We make it a point to go out to a Chinese restaurant so we're in that environment," Maziar says. "Our little guy gets to eat whatever he likes, and my parents love Chinese food."

This year, the couple has happily accepted an invitation from Chua's aunt in Toronto, who will host a family meal that includes symbolic Chinese New Year dishes. To ensure long life, the family digs in to e-fu noodles (Cantonese-style egg noodles) stir-fried with mushrooms and chives. For prosperity, they enjoy whole fish steamed with green onions, cilantro, ginger and soy sauce, and sweet rice cakes that have been dipped in an egg batter and pan-fried. "The food transcends everything and brings people together," says Maziar.

Meanwhile, Irene Fong; her husband, Sean Grattan; and their infant daughter, Penny, will be making the trek back to Ottawa, where Fong grew up. Fong's parents, originally from Hong Kong, have close ties to their native culture.

They celebrate the New Year with a variety foods — including roast pork, roast duck, steamed whole fish and broth-style soup — many of which symbolize good health, wealth and happiness.

Typically, Fong's aunts and uncles host the feast. Fong, now a chef, remembers liking most everything as a child, including dishes that seemed strange to her and her cousins, who were all born in Canada. "There were specific Chinese New Year foods that, to a kid, were kind-of yucky," she says with a laugh. "And I was the only kid who liked them." The family still tucks into traditional hair vegetable, a type of algae eaten for prosperity, and lotus root for abundance. She also looks forward to sea cucumber braised with black Chinese mushrooms in a thick, savoury sauce.

Yaz Maziar, centre, his wife, Heslie Chua, and their 4-year-old son, Cameron, celebrate Chinese New Year with traditional cuisine. JON NICHOLLS

Fong says the family's menus have evolved to accommodate changing tastes and to welcome non-Chinese members of the family, such as Grattan. She remembers butter tarts showing up for dessert one year, and a simple noodle dish — representing long life — dressed up with kid-friendly beef and broccoli. "Chinese New Year is kind-of like Christmas in Canada," she says. "Everyone celebrates their own way, and there are no hard-and-fast rules."

Dressing up your home for celebrations

Unlike traditional Western holidays such as Christmas or New Year's — the go-big-or-go-home events with expensive gifts, giant inflatable snowmen and two months of holiday tunes — Chinese New Year is a much more focused affair. And the theme is always the same: family and prosperity.

That may be why decorating for a Chinese New Year celebration is fairly simple, incorporating lucky colours (red and gold) and other small symbols of togetherness and wealth in all areas of life.

"It's symbolic that family comes together at the close of the year and that the family is together at the beginning of the year," says Wendy Lee, lead planner and wedding designer at Asian Fusion Weddings.

Getting the home ready for the 15-day celebration is fairly simple, she says.

"Even though it's a celebration, it's not equated with a western New Year's Eve. It's more low-key because it's about family," Lee says.

"If you do New Year's Eve western-style, there's a countdown at midnight. We never used to do a countdown at home."

Decor starts with red lanterns, and signs with Chinese calligraphy, both of which are easily found at Chinese department or grocery stores, according to Lee.

Traditional decor includes bright reds, magentas and golds, as seen here in this table setting. PEPPER AND LIGHT

The signs have words associated with welcoming the New Year, and wishing guests health and longevity, she says. These are placed above doors and in the windows.

Dinner time

A dinner celebrating Chinese New Year is often at a round table and is served family- or buffet-style, according to Lee, with a turntable-like tray in the middle holding all the food.

A traditional place setting will include a large plate with a small, empty rice bowl in the middle, a set of chopsticks to the right of the plate, a spoon and a small teacup. A large water or wine glass may also be included.

For Lee's part, she is trying to spread the notion of dressing up the dining room, or an event space for a larger crowd, with a bit more flair.

"Even if your family is 30 or 40 people and you have a small room enclosed in a restaurant area, you can still bring some of these decorative elements in," she says. "People can add their personal touches."

ANDREA JANUS

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Predictions for 2017, from the zodiac

Paul Ng

ROOSTER — 1993, 1981, 1969, 1957, 1945, 1933
Although this is your year, it usually means conflicts. Despite this, as long as you don't gamble, your finances will be good. Your authority will improve, as will your romances. **WORK:** You favour businesses to do with authority and inter-people relations. You are good at sales and marketing. Other favourable sectors are politics, policing and the army. Spiritual endeavours such as religions and philosophy are also good. **RELATIONS:** You will have plenty of romances. If you are single, you should enjoy your relations. If you are married, beware of extramarital relations. You will have many friends, some of whom should help you succeed.

DOG — 1994, 1982, 1970, 1958, 1946, 1934
You year is full of conflicts against people and in relationships. You should not consider marriage. But your finances are good. **WORK:** You favour businesses in which you have authority, but not public relations. Jobs such as the army, police, and politics may be good for you. Scientific research, creative arts or architecture are also favourable. **RELATIONS:** Your relationships are unstable. Couples tend to disagree and argue. You should take a step back and enjoy peace.

PIG (BOAR) — 1995, 1983, 1971, 1959, 1947, 1935
This is a lucky year for you. Despite several undesirable events, you remain unscathed. With a strong travel sign, you will either move or take a trip. Beware of the health of elderly family members. **WORK:** You favour business in industries including mobility, logistics, transportation, travel, and automobiles. Trading, sales and marketing are also good choices. **RELATIONS:** You may suffer from loneliness.

RAT — 1996, 1984, 1972, 1960, 1948, 1936
This is a "breaking point" year for you. Work will take extra effort. Relations with people are weak. However, you're learning sign is strong causing you to be smart and swift. **WORK:** You favour work to do with education and analysis, such as teaching, computers, and research. You also do well in work related to marriage, banquets and performance. **RELATIONS:** Beware of negative relationships. This is not a good year for you to marry. Be patient with your sweetheart.

OX — 1997 1985 1973 1961 1949 1937
For you, this year will be a very favourable one. Nonetheless, there will be jealousy from others. **WORK:** You favour work that deals with blood, such as a surgeon, dentist or butcher. Your strong arts sign makes you favour design, painting, music or architecture. You may also be attracted to a business partnership this year. **RELATIONS:** You will have very good relationships and you favour public relations work. If you are single, consider marriage. If you are already married, be extra loving to your spouse.

TIGER — 1998, 1986, 1974, 1962, 1950, 1938
It's a lucky year for you. You will be spiritual. Most things you do will require extra efforts to be achieved. **WORK:** You favour work dealing with people, such as sales and marketing. Spiritual endeavours are also good for you, such as a preacher, philosopher, or writer. **RELATIONS:** External relations tend to be better than internal ones. You will have more friends than enemies.

RABBIT — 1999, 1987, 1975, 1963, 1951, 1939
It is an opposite and adverse year for you. You will lose money and be prone to accidents. Refrain from gambling. Beware of conflicts with people. **WORK:** You should refrain from speculative work, such as gambling and stock markets. You favour work that deals with blood, such as a surgeon, butcher, or soldier. **RELATIONS:** Your relationships may be quite turbulent. Be more forgiving. Resist being stubborn.

DRAGON — 2000, 1988, 1976, 1964, 1952, 1940
Plenty of luck and help will come your way. Both wealth and authority will increase. Your relations with people are also good. This is the year to move ahead. **WORK:** You favour being in authority and human resources. Spiritualism may also lead you to work as a preacher, philosopher or writer. You also favour the political and education sectors. **RELATIONS:** This is also a good year to have children.

SNAKE —2001, 1989, 1977, 1965, 1953, 1941
This is a powerful year for you full of opportunity and monetary success. But success will come through your own initiative and efforts. **WORK:** You favour speculative businesses, such as the stock market. You work well with people. Hence, sales and marketing are good career choices. A promotion may be on the horizon. You may start a new business or expand the one you own. **RELATIONS:** You will have excellent people relations this year.

HORSE —2002, 1990, 1978, 1966, 1954, 1942, 1930
You tend to run into controversies and arguments. You have plenty of romances and helpful signs to counteract the negativities. **WORK:** You favour business to do with breaking, such as demolition, renovation, and mining. You would also do well as a public speaker, lawyer, soldier or police officer. Public relations suits you as well. **RELATIONS:** This may not be a good year to get married.

GOAT (SHEEP) — 2003, 1991, 1979, 1967, 1955, 1943, 1931
A strong travel sign will encourage you to take more trips or participate in trading. **WORK:** You favour work that deals with blood, such as a surgeon, dentist, butcher, or soldier. **RELATIONS:** You are occupied by a loneliness sign. Romance will dwindle this year.

MONKEY — 2004, 1992, 1980, 1968, 1956, 1944, 1932
Monkeys may see monetary improvement. An illness sign may make you prone to colds and flu. **WORK:** You are drawn towards the healing sector, such as medicine or pharmacy. Business and finance management are also good choices. **RELATIONS:** Your love life is unstable.

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SPOTLIGHT OTTAWA

Fab bands coming for Megaphono

The late great musicians of all genres lost to us last year, remain close to our hearts still; It is a long list with Bowie, Prince, George Micheal, Merle Haggard, Leon Russell and Leonard Cohen among them. Add too, Lemmy of Motorhead.

Last year The House of TARG organised a tribute show for the iconic metal band's frontman and founder, and they are doing it again Friday Jan. 27. It's a Pay What You Can event (with a suggestion of $5). Pity folk punker Lisa Leblanc isn't on the line-up — she does a brilliant bluegrass take on Ace of Spades. You will have to wait until April to see Leblanc in town. Loviator, MotorMouth, Lemmy Royale and Lycanthro are a few of the acts taking on the Kilmister.

The House of TARG is one of the venues taking part in Megaphono, a three day music fest set for Wednesday, Thursday and Friday Feb. 1-3. Fab bands on the line-up include Bry Webb, Reverb Syndicate, Partner, Minotaurs, Lonely Parade and Beyries, whose debut album Landing is being released Feb. 24.

Beyries, who is playing Feb. 3 at the House of Common, has been dealing with depression and two bouts with cancer but has "landed" in a better place, she feels grounded she says. These battles also explain why Beyries is only now is releasing her debut even though she is in her late 30s.

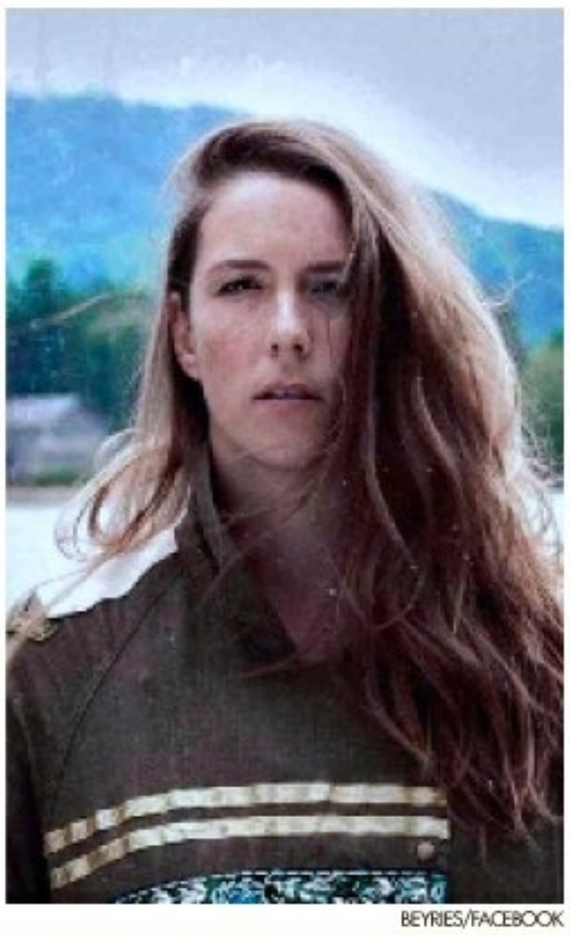
"I never thought that writing songs could be something I would do for a living. It came after a lot of pushes coming from my friends and my now manager Emmanuelle Girard," says Beyries. "While I was feeling very low and weak, she would send my demos to her friends and colleagues without telling them who was singing. And when they responded, she would send me their answers saying 'see, I'm not the only one thinking you should do it,".

What Beyries has done is deliver an album with an underpinning of pathos but is, at its core, inspirational, weaving the stylings of Carly Simon in with Alanis Morrisette.

After Beyries one could check out breweries at the Gatineau Winter Beerfest running Feb. 3 and 4 at the Canadian Museum of History.

There are over 100 beers from 30 craft breweries, mostly from Ontario and Quebec to sample and perhaps as you look out across the Ottawa river and surrounding cityscape, take a minute or two to raise a glass to those legends lost but also to celebrate what is so easily available locally, the brews, views and music of the nation's capital.

-WILL MCGUIRK



BEYRIES/FACEBOOK

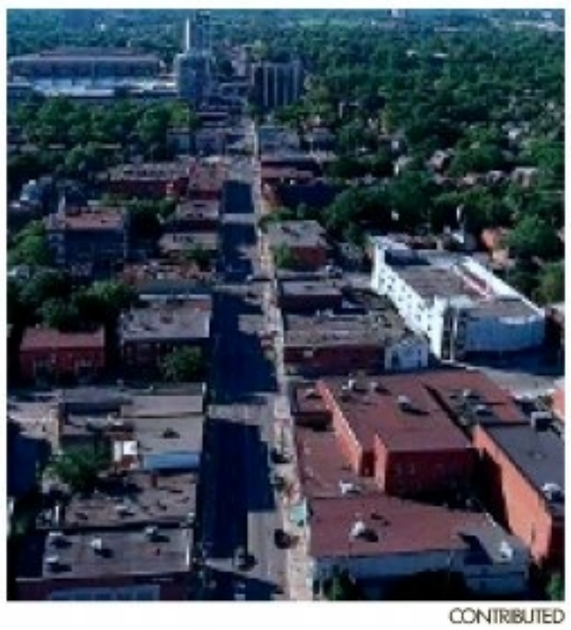
OLD NEIGHBOURHOOD SHOWS THAT IT'S FORWARD THINKING

Just because the Glebe is one of the oldest neighbourhoods in Ottawa doesn't mean it's stuck in the past.

In recent years, the Glebe has completely transformed into one of the only areas in the city that manages to flawlessly combines ultra modern amenities with stunning heritage charm.

To put it simply, the Glebe is the place to be in Ottawa.

On top of dozens of restaurants and bars, unique and cool shopping options, festivals and events, right in the heart of the Glebe is the beautifully revamped Lansdowne Park, which includes TD Place, home of the Grey Cup Champion Ottawa RedBlacks, as well as the Ottawa Fury FC and Ottawa 67s.



CONTRIBUTED

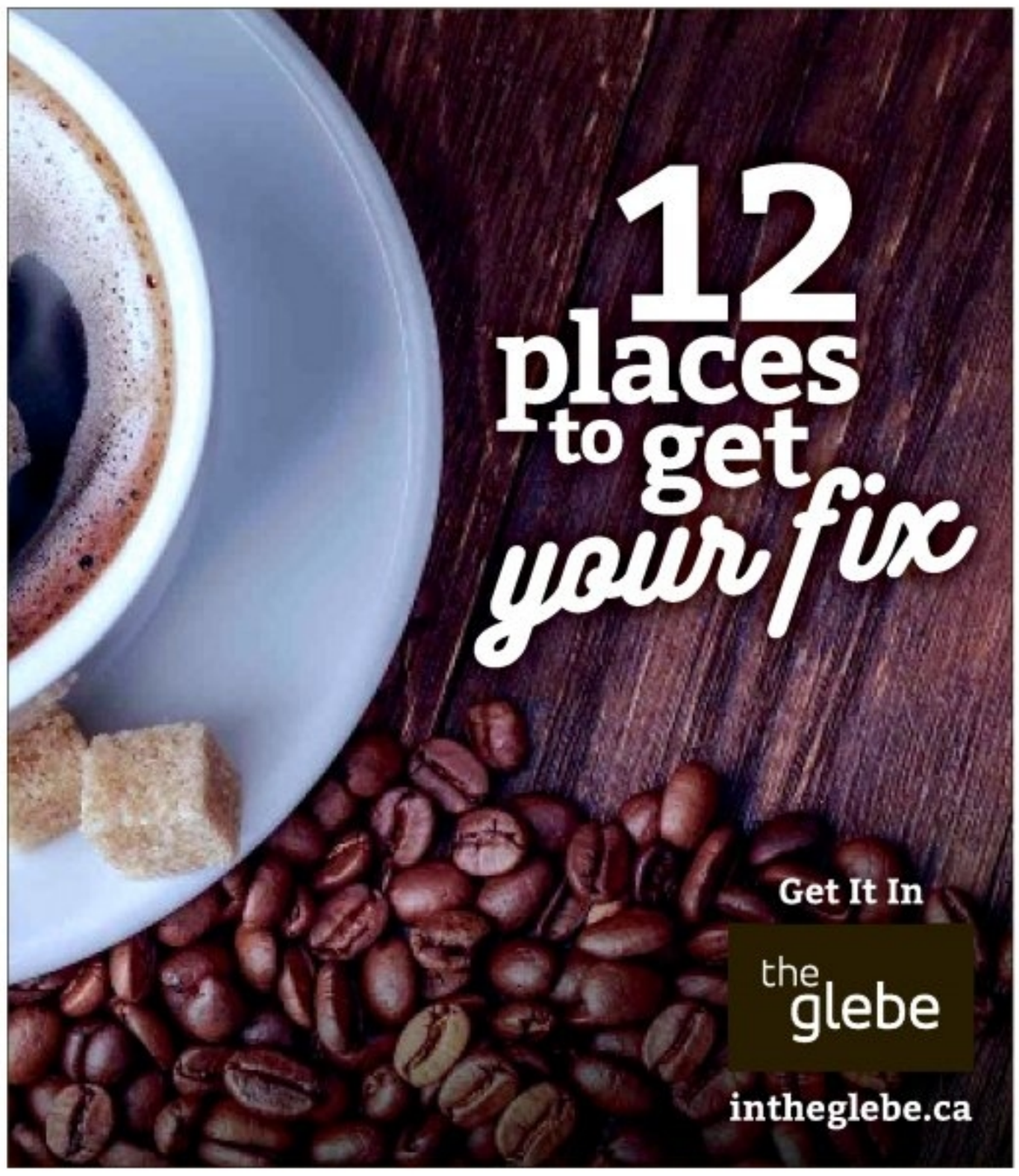
In 2016, roughly 3-million people visited Lansdowne, a 40 per cent increase from the previous year. The events at TD Place alone attracted over 800,000 people, nearly the entire population of Ottawa.

Those numbers are likely to increase this year thanks, in part, to a recent exemption from Ontario's Retail Business Holidays Act, allowing businesses in the Glebe to stay open on some statutory holidays.

There are also a number of do-not-miss events happening in the Glebe throughout 2017. As part of the city's yearlong celebration of Canada's 150th birthday, Ottawa Welcomes the World is taking place at the Horticulture Building at Lansdowne all year, and a handful of fun Winterlude-related events such as Snowmania are taking place throughout the area.

Visit the Glebe

Rediscover the Glebe in 2017. To help plan your day in the Glebe, visit intheglebe.ca.



Fostering cultural exchange between Canada and China

A newly established arts centre here in Ottawa has launched with the goal of promoting an ongoing exchange of culture and performances between Canada and China.

RideauStone Arts Centre is led by CEO Peng (Patrick) Lin, who brings a wealth of international experience to the table. He has worked in Foreign Affairs in China as well as with the Beijing Municipal Government, Siemens China Headquarters, China Netcom and other large multinational and domestic enterprises.

In celebration of Canada's 150 birthday, RideauStone Arts Centre's inaugural concert is a presentation of one of China's most internationally acclaimed orchestras — the Beijing Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Maestro Muhai Tang — for two shows, at Toronto's Sony Centre for the Performing Arts on Feb. 9 and here in Ottawa at the National Arts Centre on Feb. 12.

"This concert by the Beijing Symphony Orchestra will be a cultural jewel for Ottawa in 2017 and it further highlights the strength of our partnership with the City of Beijing," says Mayor Jim Watson.

"I encourage Ottawa residents to come out and enjoy this outstanding orchestra and celebrate our strong ties with our sister city, Beijing, as well as with the people of China."

CONTRIBUTED

This rousing program combines a work by Chinese composer Lu Zheng in celebration of the Chinese New Year (this Saturday, Jan. 28), as well as acclaimed violinist Feng Ning performing Brahms' Violin Concerto alongside Mussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition.

The performances will be the Beijing Symphony Orchestra's first concerts in Canada.

More information

Enjoy RideauStone Arts Centre's presentation of the Beijing Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Maestro Muhai Tang at 3 p.m. on Feb. 12 in the NAC's newly renovated Southam Hall.

Program:

- *Lavallee: O Canada – arr. Ridout*
- *Er/Han: March of the Volunteers*
- *Zheng/Ma: A Greeting from Beijing*
- *Brahms: Violin Concerto – Feng Ning, violin*

–Intermission–

- *Mussorgsky: Pictures at an Exhibition – arr. Ravel*

**program subject to change*

Tickets start at $29. For tickets and more information, visit nac-cna.ca.

This concert is presented by RideauStone Arts Centre in collaboration with the Ottawa Symphony Orchestra.

'Timing is right' to bring Davis Cup back to Ottawa

For the first time in over 20 years, the largest annual international team competition in sport is coming to Ottawa.

The Arena at TD Place at Lansdowne Park will be the host site for the upcoming Davis Cup by BNP Paribas World Group first-round tie between Canada and Great Britain, which gets underway on Feb. 3.

Ottawa last hosted the Davis Cup in February 1994, when Canada defeated Jamaica 5-0 in a Group II zonal tie.

"It's been more than two decades since Davis Cup has been held in Ottawa and the timing is right now to bring it back," says Gavin Ziv, vice-president, professional events, Tennis Canada. "Playing Great Britain in the Nation's Capital during the Canada 150 celebration year presented a perfect opportunity and we could not be more excited about it."

It will be the first time tennis will be played at TD Place (matches will be played on an indoor hard court).

What makes the Davis Cup different than other tennis events is the fact that the crowd is encouraged to cheer loudly for its home team, something Canadian team captain Martin Laurendeau believes will help his players perform.

"We are always at our best when we play at home in front of loud, patriotic crowds and that is exactly what we will need here to defeat a strong team from Great Britain," says Laurendeau.

"This will be the first time many of our guys will play in this city and we are really looking forward to introducing a new generation of tennis fans to the passion and excitement that is Davis Cup."

Get your tickets

Tickets are still available for the Davis Cup in Ottawa. For tickets, go to tdplace.ca, call 613-232-6767 x1 or visit The Box Office at TD Place.

CONTRIBUTED

The 2015 champions, Great Britain is the #2 ranked Davis Cup country in the world and will be the seeded nation for this tie. Canada is currently ranked #12.

The winner of this tie will move on to the World Group quarter-finals and will also keep their spot in the World Group for the following year.

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Your essential daily news

After years of draught, California ski resorts see record snowfall

5 ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCES TO HAVE IN ECUADOR

With four distinct eco-systems, Ecuador is more than just a jumping-off point for the Galapagos. Exploring the interior delivers Andes mountain magic and Amazon jungle surprises. You can visit Ecuador all year round. January to May are the warmest months, but also the wettest. June to December tends to be cooler, and crowds are rare. **DOUG WALLACE/FOR METRO**

DOUG WALLACE/FOR METRO

1 Explore the capital

Quito is a series of mini-neighbourhoods, each with a different essence and identity. Old Town brims with historic buildings, churches and museums. La Marsical comes alive at five, with young locals and tourists spilling out of the bars and restaurants near Plaza Foch. Head over to Calle de la Ronda for an authentic Ecuadorian snack and a happy-hour two-for-one. Cabs cost next to nothing, so you can skip the too-busy bus.

JODI BERNSTEIN/FOR METRO

2 Get sporty

Adventure sports abound in Baños in south-central Ecuador, a relaxing spa town best known for its paragliding, canyoneering and zip lining, as well as its picturesque parks, hilltop hikes and calming waters. Spring for a massage at one of the spas or pop into the local mineral baths for $2, and do the hot-and-cold healing-water circuit.

DOUG WALLACE/FOR METRO

3 Hit the highlands

A trip up the winding highways to the highlands nets you volcanic vistas, indigenous realism and misty forest. The city of Otavalo, in a lake region known for its textiles, has the largest outdoor market in South America, with row after row of stalls selling crafts and souvenirs. Spend a night at 200-year-old Hacienda Pinsaqui nearby, and enjoy a canelazo in the legendary bar — a spiked cinnamon tea.

TOURS

G Adventures offers a nine-day Ecuador tour every month throughout 2017 as part of its National Geographic Journeys adventure series.

DOUG WALLACE/FOR METRO

4 Journey to the jungle

Journey into the jungle for a night or three at one of the remote lodges in and around Yasuni National Park, accessible only by motorized canoe. You get the full rainforest effect communing with monkeys, fishing for piranha, scanning treetops for rare birds, and watching parrots play along the clay riverbanks. Local community visits yield eye-opening simplicity, a vibrant culture and warm hospitality.

DOUG WALLACE/FOR METRO

5 Eat local

Traditional Ecuadorian food is plentiful, reasonably priced and delicious, particularly the barbecue. Fresh fish, fried chicken and churrasco beef dishes are dolled up with a variety of homestyle hot sauces, patatas fritas, flavoured rice or deep-fried plantain. Steer clear of the street food, as your stomach may not react as positively as your eyes, but do step outside the taste-bud box and experience some of the authentic delicacies. **Doug Wallace's trip was sponsored by GAdventures.com, which did not approve or review this story.**

Where great golf is par for the course

NEVADA

Top courses just a short trip from the Vegas Strip

Brian Kendall
For Metro Canada

Mexican-American professional BMX rider and television personality Ricardo Laguna tees off at Topgolf Las Vegas. CONTRIBUTED

Las Vegas offers temptations that would make Caligula blush.

But Sin City is many things, not least an outstanding golf destination. On a recent visit, I played several exceptional courses, whacked balls at newly opened Topgolf Las Vegas — and between rounds dined like a sated emperor in dining rooms that included, most memorably, Nobu Restaurant in Caesars Palace.

Part of the beauty of golf in Las Vegas is that several top courses are just a short cab ride from the Strip, eliminating the need for a rental car.

Next door to the Mandalay Resort and Casino is Bali Hai Golf Club, a gorgeous Schmidt-Curley design offering views of the towering casinos from tees and greens. Golf purists might prefer Desert Pines Golf Club, also in the heart of the city. This Carolina sand hills-style design by the great Pete Dye is lined with more than 4,000 pines.

Another must-play course right in town is Bear's Best Las Vegas, featuring 18 reproductions of holes selected by Jack Nicklaus from the more than 270 courses he has designed around the world.

Tribute courses like Bear's Best are a natural fit in a town where giant-sized knockoffs of the Eiffel Tower and the Statue of Liberty loom over the throngs of fun-seekers wandering the Strip day and night.

At Royal Links Golf Club homage is paid to the greatest holes found at the hallowed links that have hosted British Opens.

> **This is a city that almost demands at least one big splurge every visit. Mine was at Nobu Restaurant in Caesars Palace.**

A highlight is the recreation of Royal Troon's famous par-three Postage Stamp, which at 123 yards is the shortest hole in the Open rotation.

Other outstanding courses in or near Las Vegas include Las Vegas Paiute Golf Resort, Cascata, TPC Las Vegas and Las Vegas National Golf Club, famous as the site of Tiger Woods' first PGA Tour victory in 1996.

And a popular new attraction for golfers, Topgolf Las Vegas, opened last May in the glittering heart of downtown. The latest in a growing U.S.-wide chain of deluxe driving ranges, Topgolf features four levels of hitting bays, hundreds of HDTVs, a stage for live concerts, swimming pools, private VIP rooms, and even a Callaway golf fitting centre. Golfers score points by hitting targets on the range.

It's all wonderfully entertaining. Indeed, my visit to Topgolf made me wonder if I was looking at the future of golf. Regional Topgolf champions recently competed in Las Vegas for a grand prize of $50,000 U.S.

Pricing at Topgolf starts at $30 U.S. per hour for a group of up to six people, a bargain as Las Vegas entertainments go.

But this is a city that almost demands at least one big splurge every visit. Mine was at Nobu Restaurant in Caesars Palace, part of a wildly acclaimed fine dining chain featuring the Asian fusion cuisine of Nobuyuki "Nobu" Matsuhisa.

Specialties include black cod miso (Robert De Niro's favourite), rock shrimp tempura, and yellowtail sashimi with jalapeno and squid pasta. In all my golf travels, I've rarely — if ever — dined better.

For more golf travel stories, visit Brian's website at canadiangolftraveller.com

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metro SPORTS

Canada's Mac Marcoux earned his second gold of the para-alpine skiing worlds, teaming with guide Jack Leitch to win the visually-impaired super-G

Venus and Serena Williams will face off in the Australian Open final on Saturday in Melbourne. CLIVE BRUNSKILL/GETTY IMAGES

Sister act back in major final after 8-year gap

AUSTRALIAN OPEN

Serena, Venus in celebratory mood ahead of women's finale

Win or lose, Serena Williams sees another all-sister final at the Australian Open as cause for celebration.

The 35-year-old Williams arrived in Australia bidding for a 23rd Grand Slam title, aiming to break the Open-era record she shares with Steffi Graf. By winning, she'd also regain the No. 1 ranking she lost after her U.S. Open semifinal exit.

She doesn't enjoy the suspense, or talk about the number. Her older sister, Venus, knows that better than anyone after their two decades of competing together in majors.

Now the 36-year-old Venus is the potential roadblock, back in a major final for the first time since she lost the previous all-Williams Grand Slam final at Wimbledon in 2009.

"I just feel like no matter what happens, we've won," Serena said. "A Williams is going to win this tournament."

Venus hasn't added to her seven major titles since Wimbledon in 2008, but is in her best form since being diagnosed with energy-sapping Sjogren's syndrome in 2011.

In fact, she was the first Williams into the 2017 final, rallying to beat 25-year-old CoCo Vandeweghe — the only player in the women's semifinals who was younger than 34 by a score 6-7 (3), 6-2, 6-3. A jubilant Venus could barely contain her emotions after clinching a spot in the final on her fourth match point, putting her hands to her face, her jaw dropping, before she crossed her arms over her heart and did a stylish pirouette.

> **No matter what happens, we've won. A Williams is going to win this tournament.**
> Serena Williams

Feeling like "it was in my hands to force this Williams final" in the subsequent match, six-time Australian Open champion Serena overwhelmed 34-year-old Mirjana Lucic-Baroni 6-2, 6-1 of Croatia.

By the time Roger Federer beat fourth-seeded Stan Wawrinka 7-5, 6-3, 1-6, 4-6, 6-3 in an all-Swiss night match to became the oldest man to reach a Grand Slam final since Ken Rosewall made the 1974 U.S. Open final at 39, they were calling it Throwback Thursday at Melbourne Park.

Three players who can combine for 46 Grand Slam titles and 106 years in age advanced to a final one after the other. Federer, returning from six months out to rest his injured left knee, will next play Sunday against either 14-time major champion Rafael Nadal and Grigor Dimitrov.

With the Williamses locked in for Saturday night, expectations are rising for another vintage Roger-Rafa bout.

"It's going to be special either way — one is going to go for his first slam or it's the epic battle with Rafa," Federer said. "All I care about is that I can win."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NHL

Ex-Sens CEO could see writing on wall

Cyril Leeder said he had a sense his days leading the Ottawa Senators' front office might be coming to a close.

"In business you get good at reading signs, you need to be," Leeder said Wednesday. "I would be disingenuous if I didn't say I saw signs of this coming, but you're never really prepared for that kind of news."

Leeder met with reporters a day after being replaced as president and chief executive officer of the Senators by Tom Anselmi. Owner Eugene Melnyk and alternate governor Sheldon Plenner informed Leeder of the change Tuesday morning during a meeting. "It was professional, it was a cordial meeting," said Leeder. "There was nothing untoward; it was just a business meeting."

Cyril Leeder THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Leeder said he's still trying to understand the need for the change, but said ultimately the decision was Melnyk's to make.

"In business sometimes you make a change, you don't need a reason to make a change. It's a cold, hard fact in business and people in the sports business should know better than anybody because we'll change coaches just because we need to make a change.

"I respect and understand that Eugene has the absolute right to make that change and he did and he doesn't need to give me a reason for it so I've got no issues with that." THE CANADIAN PRESS

IN BRIEF

United into League Cup final

Manchester United reached the English League Cup final despite surrendering its 17-match unbeaten record with a 2-1 loss to Hull in the second leg of their semifinal on Thursday.

United, which won the first leg 2-0, advanced with a 3-2 win on aggregate and will play Southampton in the final at Wembley Stadium on Feb. 26. On-loan striker Oumar Niasse scored the winner with an 85th-minute tap-in after Paul Pogba's equalizer. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jackets' Atkinson to take Malkin's All-Star place

Columbus Blue Jackets forward Cam Atkinson has been added to the Metropolitan Division roster for the this weekend's NHL all-star event in Los Angeles.

Atkinson leads Columbus and is tied for eighth in the league with 46 points in 47 games. His 24 goals are tied with the Kings' Jeff Carter for second most in the NHL. He replaces Pittsburgh Penguins forward Evgeni Malkin, who is out with a lower-body injury. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

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Cook time: 6 hours 10 minutes
Serves 4

Ingredients
- 6 chicken thighs
- 1 potato, peeled and cubed
- 1 Tbsp vegetable oil
- 2 onions, chopped
- 4 stalks celery, chopped
- 2 carrots, peeled and chopped
- 1 Tbsp fresh thyme (1 tsp dried)
- 1 or 2 bay leaves
- 1/4 cup flour
- 2 cups low-sodium chicken stock
- 1 cup fresh or frozen peas
- 1/2 cup light cream

Directions

1. In a Dutch oven or high-sided skillet, sauté onions, celery and carrots in splash of vegetable oil for about five minutes.

2. Add flour, thyme and bay leaves and stir for a minute. Add stock and stir until smooth. Simmer for 3 or 4 minutes until sauce thickens.

3. Add the potatoes and good pinch of salt and pepper.

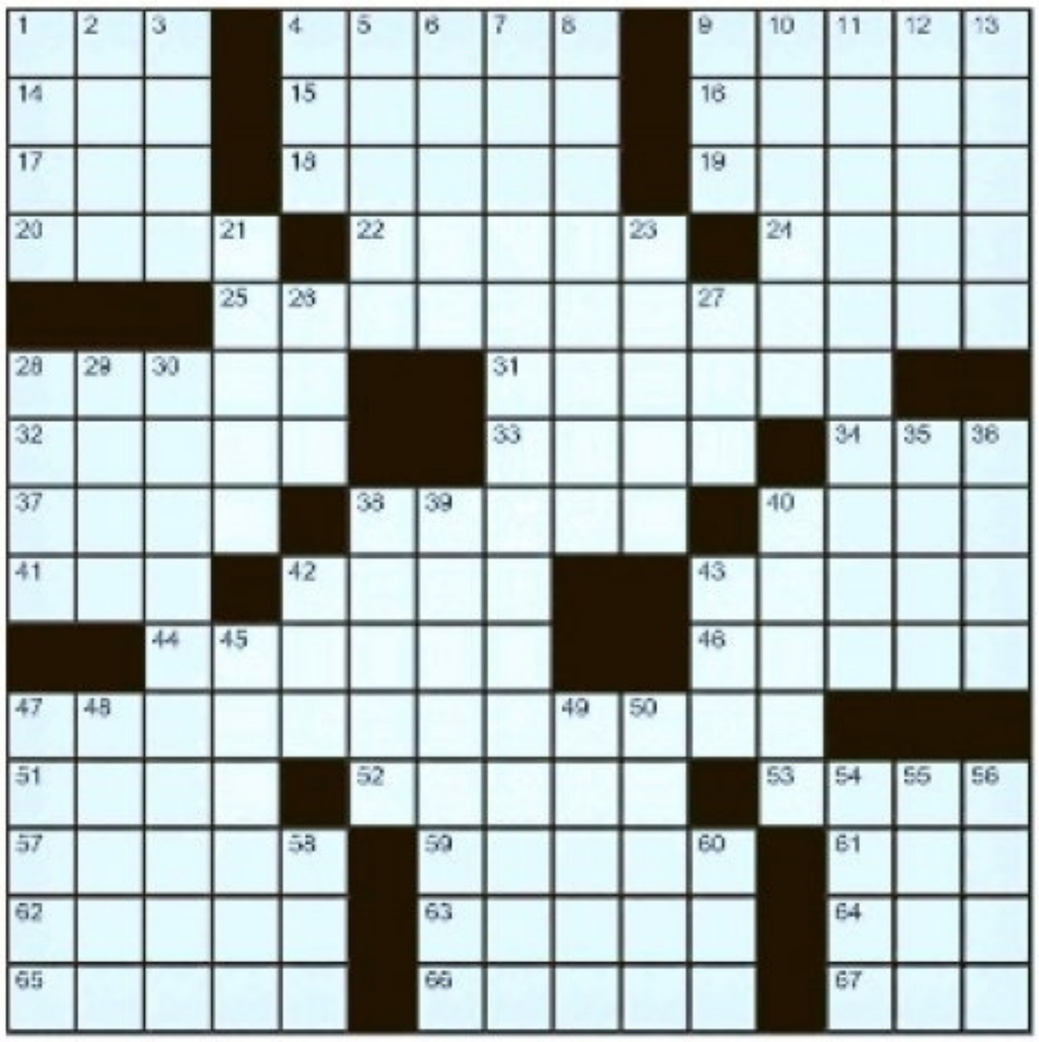
4. Place chicken thighs in the bottom of slow cooker and spoon the vegetable mixture over. Seal and set for 6 hours.

5. Add peas and cream and cook for 10 more minutes. Serve plain or over mashed potatoes.

FOR MORE MEAL IDEAS, VISIT SWEETPOTATOCHRONICLES.COM

CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. "Fancy that!" [pl.]
4. Genesis brother's namesakes
9. "Pretty Little _"
14. Collagen target
15. Medical gig for George Clooney on '90s TV: 2 wds.
16. "I challenge you to _ _!" (Sword-fight starter)
17. Caustic solution
18. Princes' "_ _ the Times"
19. Gladiator's 351
20. Goes off course
22. High wave
24. _ _ can (One-of-some spotted in the pantry)
25. Canadian scientist (b.1862 - d.1941) who was a recent Google Doodle: 2 wds.
28. Penned up
31. Swimsuits brand
32. Overturn
33. Street sort
34. Goose egg
37. Twisted
38. Sheathes, as with metal
40. Ms. Horne
41. Tree chopper
42. Elinor _ (British romance novelist)
43. Devoutness
44. Facing
46. Some chocolate treats
47. Irving _ Inc., headquartered in Halifax
51. Prefix with 'are' (Land measure)
52. Contempt
53. Heartbeat read-outs, commonly
57. The Hunter constellation
59. Green Day's "When _ _ Around"
61. Small battery
62. Happen as a result
63. Toast in a tavern!
64. PC information units
65. _ voce (Softly)
66. Particular sports network awards
67. Iris locale

DOWN
1. "_ McBeal"
2. "Howdy!": 2 wds.
3. Disgorge
4. Bronze Roman money
5. Nova Scotia island in the area of the Gulf of Maine and Bay of Fundy
6. Artist Mr. Degas
7. Section of the Rideau Canal with three vessel lift stations which are numbered 14, 15 and 16: 3 wds.
8. Keeping-track-of-game-points aid
9. Lake: French
10. Personhood proof: 2 wds.
11. "Going once, going twice..." professional
12. "The Beachcombers" character
13. Embark embarrassedly
21. "_ of a Woman" (1992)
23. Utopias
26. Math verb
27. Wide shoe width
28. Havana's locale
29. Top
30. Occupation of #25-Across, Botanist/_
35. Go _ detail (Elaborate)
36. Potato chips brand
38. North Pole surname
39. Put words to music as Tim Rice, Brit-style
40. Vassal
42. American Pres. monogram after Bill Clinton
43. Cook's need
45. Decide not to enroll or select: 2 wds.
47. Sandals and sneakers
48. "Tell _ _" by The Zombies
49. Sag
50. When flowers begin to bloom: 2 wds.
54. Candles-topped dessert
55. Eva's "Desperate Housewives" character, to pals
56. Mailing encl.
58. Retro's opposite
60. Pro golfer Ernie

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS Your daily horoscope by Francis Drake

Aries March 21 - April 20
Don't get hung up on the fact that you feel a bit lonely or cut off from others today. It's just one of those things. We all have days like this. Plus, lots of people feel this way today.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
Relations with friends or members of groups might be a bit strained or detached and cool today. Don't take this personally. It's not you. It's the spores in the air

Gemini May 22 - June 21
There's no question that relations with authority figures are strained today. Knowing this, it's not a day to ask for a favour or permission, is it?

Cancer June 22 - July 23
Travel for pleasure seems to be a bit more like work today. Ditto for exploring educational opportunities. Struggle on.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
You might be disappointed in your fair share of something today. "That's it?" Don't worry, because in a day or two, things will swing back in your favor.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Relations with partners and close friends are detached today. One tends to think, "What am I getting out of this relationship compared to what I'm putting into it?"

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Your interactions with co-workers could be better. Others are not inclined to help you or go along with things. You might even feel the same way. Just coast today.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
This is a bummer day for romantic relationships, because people tend to think, "What's in it for me?" This is not a giving day — it's quite the opposite.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Today your ideas about redecorating or making improvements at home might be halted, because the cost of things is just prohibitive. Wait a week to see what you think later.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Relations with daily contacts are strained today. In fact, you feel unloved and unappreciated. Oh well. This too, shall pass. (You are loved.)

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Something to do with your finances (business or personal) disappoints you today. Well, you are not alone. Many people feel a financial squeeze play right now.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
Today you are more concerned with practical realism as opposed to touchyfeely matters. Frankly, you simply have to work with what you've got. Today, you're on your own.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

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9	4	5	1	3	2	7	6	8
7	5	2	6	4	3	8	9	1
8	6	3	9	5	1	2	4	7
4	9	1	2	8	7	6	5	3
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